Amendments to the Abstract

Please replace the abstract at page 131 with the following:

The present invention relates to fusion proteins comprising a naturally occurring primate MAdCAM, wherein said naturally occurring primate MAdCAM binds α4β7 integrin and has at least about 75% amino acid similarity to an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:2, SEQ ID NO:4 and SEQ ID NO:6. ~~isolated and/or recombinant nucleic acids which encode primate MAdCAMs and to proteins or polypeptides referred to herein as isolated and/or recombinant primate MAdCAMs. The invention further relates to recombinant nucleic acid constructs, comprising a nucleic acid which encodes a primate MAdCAM of the present invention, a portion thereof, or a variant; to host cells comprising such constructs, useful for the production of recombinant proteins; the use of nucleic acids and/or proteins in assays to identify inhibitors (e.g., antagonists) of primate MAdCAM function; and to antibodies reactive with primate MAdCAM, which are useful in in vitro methods, diagnostic and/or therapeutic applications. The invention also relates to the treatment of individuals, particularly humans, suffering from a disease (e.g., inflammatory bowel disease) associated with leukocyte recruitment to the gastrointestinal tract or other tissues, for example, as a result of binding of leukocytes to cells expressing the molecule MAdCAM (gut-associated endothelium), comprising administering to the individual an effective amount of an agent, such as an antibody which inhibits the binding of leukocytes to MAdCAM.~~